

# A New Species of *Memecylon* (Melastomataceae) from Taiwan

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**ABSTRACT.** *Memecylon pendulum* Chih C. Wang, Y. H. Tseng, Y. T. Chen & Kun C. Chang, a new species of Melastomataceae from Taiwan, is described and illustrated. This new species is allied to *M. lanceolatum* Blanco but is clearly distinguished by its pendulous branchlets, smaller leaves to 7 cm long, shallowly 4-lobed calyx, obtuse or rounded apices of flower buds, and yellowish green fruit at maturity.

**Key words:** IUCN Red List, Melastomataceae, *Memecylon*, Taiwan.

The genus *Memecylon* L. (Melastomataceae) consists of about 150 species, mainly in the Old World tropics (Mabberley, 1987; Chen & Renner, 2007). There are 11 species of *Memecylon* in China (Chen, 1984), and in Taiwan the genus has been represented by only one species, *M. lanceolatum* Blanco (Chang, 1977; Huang & Huang, 1993). During a field trip along a stream in central Taiwan in June 2005, an interesting new species of *Memecylon* was collected, which clearly differed from previously described species of the genus (Clarke, 1879; Gamble, 1919; Bremer, 1979; Murugan et al., 2000).

***Memecylon pendulum*** Chih C. Wang, Y. H. Tseng, Y. T. Chen & Kun C. Chang, sp. nov. TYPE: Taiwan. Taichung Co.: Taipen township, Huang-chikeng, along stream, 24°04'196"N, 120°47'138"E, ca. 265 m, 1 June 2005 (fl.), Chih-Chiang Wang 1601 (holotype, TCF; isotype, MO). Figure 1.

Haec species *Memecyloni lanceolato* Blanco affinis, sed ab eo ramis pendulis, foliis minoribus (2.5–7 × 1.5–2.5 cm), calycibus non profunde 4-lobatis, alabastro apice obtuso vel rotundato et fructibus maturis flavo-viridibus differt.

Large shrubs or small trees, 3–6 m high; bark grayish, shallowly fissured; branches terete, glabrous; branchlets pendulous, twigs with acute angles. Leaves opposite, glabrous on both surfaces, 2.5–7 × 1.5–2.5 cm, elliptic, cuneate to attenuate at base, entire, acute or acuminate at apex; veins pinnate,

midrib impressed adaxially and slightly raised abaxially, lateral veins 4 to 7 per side, coriaceous, drying dull greenish yellow; petioles 3–5 mm, channeled adaxially. Inflorescences axillary cymose; peduncle 3–7 mm, 4-angled; pedicels 2–3 mm, slender; bracts 0.5–0.8 mm. Flower buds obtuse or rounded at apex with the petals exposed; expanded flowers 5–6 mm wide; calyx purple, campanulate, 1.8–2 mm wide, shallowly 4-lobed; petals 4, white, blue at base, broadly elliptic to obovate, to 2 × 2.5 mm, shortly clawed at base, acute or apiculate at apex; disc striate; stamens 8, equal; filaments slender, to 4 mm; anthers ca. 2 mm, the connective with a gland; style subulate, 3.5–4 mm; stigma simple. Fruit globose, 7–8 mm diam., crowned by a persistent calyx, the fruit usually yellowish green when mature; seed 1, ca. 6 mm diam.

**Distribution and habitat.** *Memecylon pendulum* is known only from only two localities in Taichung County in central Taiwan. The two sites were located on hilly slopes at altitudes of 265 m and ca. 320 m.

**IUCN Red List category.** *Memecylon pendulum* is known only from Taichung County in central Taiwan. Our field observations suggest that this species is uncommon, and the population size is estimated to number fewer than 250 mature individuals. We assess a preliminary conservation status of Endangered (EN), according to IUCN Red List criteria (IUCN, 2001).

**Phenology.** Flowering in the new species was observed in June, and fruits were collected in December.

**Etymology.** The specific epithet refers to the pendulous branchlets of the new species.

**Discussion.** *Memecylon pendulum* is closely allied to *M. lanceolatum* Blanco. The new species is clearly distinguished by its pendulous branchlets, smaller leaves (2.5–7 × 1.5–2.5 cm), the shallowly 4-lobed calyx, flower buds with obtuse to rounded apices, and the yellowish green mature fruits. *Memecylon lanceo-*



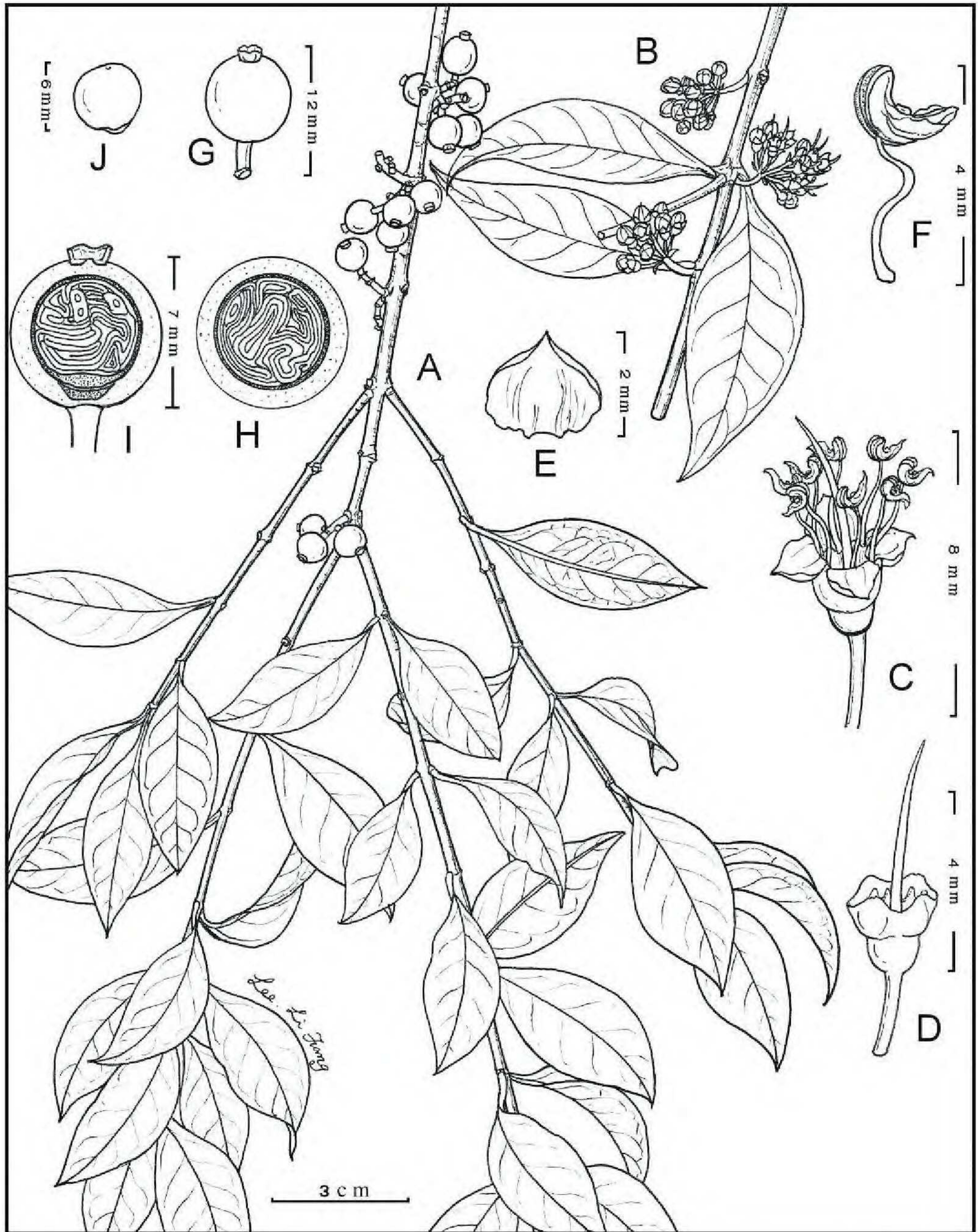


Figure 1. *Memecylon pendulum* Chih C. Wang, Y. H. Tseng, Y. T. Chen & Kun C. Chang. —A. Habit. —B. Flower buds. —C. Flower. —D. Calyx cup with the style visible. —E. Petal. —F. Stamen, lateral view. —G. Fruit. —H. Cross section of fruit. —I. Longitudinal section of fruit. —J. Seed. Drawn from the holotype *Chih-Chiang Wang 1601* (TCF).

*latum* has ascending branchlets, larger leaves (7–9 × 2.3–3.5 cm), a truncate calyx, flower buds with acute apices, and purple to black-purple to black mature fruits. Concerning the distribution range, *M. lanceolatum* has a broader distribution, ranging from the

Philippines to Borneo, Celebes, and Taiwan. In Taiwan, the taxon is confined to the island of Lanyu (Huang & Huang, 1993). This contrasts with the endemic distribution of *M. pendulum*, which is known only from central Taiwan.



*Paratypes.* TAIWAN. **Taichung Co.:** Wufung township, Ishenteng, hilly slope, ca. 320 m, 4 Dec. 2006 (fr.), *Chih-Chiang Wang 1720* (TCF).

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